

**MINUTES OF CARE LEAVERS FOCUS GROUP MEETING**  
**HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2004**

Venue: Learning Shop, Bury

**ACTION**

**1. PROGRESS ON ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**

- N/A.

**2. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

- What benefits other than money do you see in employment?
- What would you see as a reasonable/realistic weekly/hourly rate?
- What is stopping you from gaining a job?
- What type of support and from who would you like to see in place to help you gain and sustain employment.

**3. KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION****What benefits other than money do you see in employment?**

- Mind off your troubles.
- Keeps you out of trouble.
- Enjoying the job.
- Improve and better self-esteem.
- To meet new people.
- Pay off your debts.
- Increase/improve your CV.
- To have a carer/not be a dole dosser.
- To have a sense of purpose.
- Improve confidence.
- More independence.
- To have more self worth.
- Apply for tax credits.

**What would you see as a reasonable/realistic wage?**

- Depends on what the job is.
- What the stress levels are.
- Not sure.
- More skilled – more pay.
- £6.00 per hour sounds fair > £5.29.
- £5.00 per hour.
- To come out with £200 per week.
- £12,000 per year would be nice.
- Certain trained jobs should pay more.
- Low skilled jobs offer low wages and there isn't any future in those jobs.
- Some people are overqualified for some jobs.
- Piecework is really hard, you can loose money and it's difficult to work out how much tax you need to pay.
- Some people would be prepared to work with training for two years eg NVQ, Apprentices on a lowish rate of pay but pay that fits the job – as they would be sorted for the rest of their life.

**What is stopping you from gaining a job?**

- Age – you are only young once, enjoy it, plenty of time to get work.
- Age – too young for insurance reasons.
- Age – too young, government guidelines eg 18 years old to work with elderly people, 21 years old for counselling.
- Motivation – lack of motivation.
- Commitment to work every day.
- Lack of education, no qualification due to moving from school to school, didn't fit into school. Some didn't feel school was important.
- Lack of experience – employers want experience.
- Rent/own tenancy – this causes problems as low paid work does not cover the costs of rent, council tax as well as electricity, food, transport etc.
- Health – some have mental health problems, this can have a knock on effect on coping in social/work places.
- Childcare – very expensive even with Working Tax Credits.
- Being around people – can't cope, feel nervous being watched.
- Been out of employment for too long – lack of confidence within a work/social environment.

**What type of support and from who would you like to see in place to help you gain and sustain employment?**

- Advice on different jobs not really on careers.
- Credit support – support with applying and now/what to apply for.
- General assistance – can be daunting going on your own finding jobs, going to interviews and going on your first day of the job.
- Interview assistance – don't like interviews, rather there weren't any interviews, get too nervous – would like assistance during interviews, someone to go with them. Would prefer working interview so they can prove they can do the job, find it hard to sell themselves.
- Should have a work trial then an interview – dependant on job ie nursery staff.
- Interviews should be more practical.
- Jobs on offer are monotonous.

**4. ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN**

- Fran to look at different ways in which the group could be held?
- Fran to arrange next Focus Group Meeting.
- Fran to work with Nigel (Streetwise) regarding the Focus Group.